

**Governor's P-20 Council
Graduation Rate Project Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 6, 2005
3:00 p.m.
Meeting Notes**

Location: 1700 W. Washington, Arizona Department of Commerce; 2nd Floor Conference Room

P-20 Members Present: Dr. Sybil Francis, Chair; Dr. Jim Zaharis

Others: Page Gonzales, Dr. David Garcia, Dr. Benah Parker, Dr. Karen Butterfield, and Brian Mathieson

Staff: Debra Raeder

Debra Raeder welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced Dr. Sybil Francis as the Chair of this committee, and invited those present to introduce themselves.

Debra Raeder provided a brief update on the NGA Graduation Rate Compact signed by Governor Napolitano. The goals of the compact include:

- implement a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate using a standard definition;
- lead efforts to improve state data collection, reporting and analysis;
- implement additional indicators that provide richer information and understanding about outcomes for students and how well the system is serving them; and
- annually reporting progress on the improvement of state high school graduation, completion, and drop-out rate data.

The Committee agreed that it was important for Arizona to commit to these four goals and develop the process to ensure these goals are accomplished. Dr. Francis distributed a comparison that the Center had compiled on the NGA compact graduation definitions and what the State is currently doing, including method, who is a grad and who is not. The good news is that Arizona's definition is virtually identical to the NGA's proposed definition. At the next meeting of the Committee, ADE will provide information on how Arizona currently captures and reports graduation rates, and how the state is using student identifiers. Concern was expressed over page 15 of the compact and the vagueness of ELL Reporting as well as the meaning of the phrase "4 years plus any given summer".

The Committee agreed it was extremely important that the Council be committed to accomplishing all goals of the compact, and be the catalyst to linking data systems across the entire education pipeline from preschool through postsecondary education.

Dr. Francis then provided an update on the work of the Center for the Future of Arizona for setting a high school graduation goal for Arizona. The Center's GRAD Initiative is working to:

Approved January 26, 2006

- Clarify/define the problem;
- Set goals;
- Identify any information needed to implement goals/and consolidate what we already know;
- Develop strategies for translating knowledge into action;
- Work to bring people together and forging consensus around action.

Dr. Francis indicated that the goal set should be:

- Ambitious and achievable;
- Based on analysis; and
- Result in the educated best guess of what is possible.

The Center is soliciting support of business, education, non-profit, and government policymakers to adopt the following goal:

- 12% increase in graduation rate by 2012; and
- Arizona in the top 10 nationwide by 2020

The Center believes that success in achieving these goals will be done by a comprehensive approach; accessible quality childcare/preschool; an all-day kindergarten option; 3rd and 4th grade reading and math; transition issues in 7th through 9th grades; structure 12th grade experience for graduation; preparation for successful post-secondary pursuits; and student recovery as necessary.

The Committee requested a presentation at their next meeting from Maricopa Community Colleges on how student tracking is accomplished.